CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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LETTER DATED 24 MAY 1994 FROM THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT ENCLOSING A DOCUMENT ON BEHALF OF BELGIUM, CANADA, FRANCE, GERMANY, ITALY, THE NETHERLANDS, THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA CONTAINING A WORKING PAPER ON MILITARY HOLDINGS AND PROCUREMENT THROUGH NATIONAL PRODUCTION

I have the honour to forward to you a document on behalf of Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America. This document elaborates a working paper on military holdings and procurement through national production.

Could you please take the appropriate steps to register this document as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament as well as a Working Paper of the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments, and to have it distributed to all member delegations and non-member States participating in the work of the Conference.

(Signed) Stephen J. Ledogar
Ambassador

GE.94-61591 (E)

BELGIUM, CANADA, FRANCE, GERMANY, ITALY, THE NETHERLANDS, UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND, AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

WORKING PAPER ON MILITARY HOLDINGS AND PROCUREMENT THROUGH NATIONAL PRODUCTION

1. Operative paragraph 5 of United Nations General Assembly resolution 48/75E of 16 December 1993 encourages the Conference on Disarmament to continue its work undertaken in response to the request contained in paragraphs 12 to 15 of resolution 46/36L. Paragraph 12 of resolution 46/36L requests the Conference on Disarmament to address, as soon as possible, the question of the interrelated aspects of the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of arms, including military holdings and procurement through national production, and to elaborate universal and non-discriminatory practical means to increase openness and transparency in this field.

2. On 25 January 1994, the Conference on Disarmament established an ad hoc committee on Transparency in Armaments for the 1994 session (CD/1239). As provided in resolution 46/36L and in accordance with its 1994 programme of work (CD/TIA/CRP.8), the ad hoc committee considered, inter alia, the question of military holdings and procurement through national production.

3. It is of importance to develop non-discriminatory practical means in this field, because this will constitute a further important step forward in the promotion of transparency in military matters. A confidence-building measure whereby States would, on a voluntary basis, provide data on their military holdings and procurement through national production would enhance openness mainly in relation to States that do not depend predominantly or exclusively on arms imports to meet their defence requirements. In combination with existing transparency measures relating to conventional arms transfers, such a confidence-building measure would contribute toward a more balanced approach to the concept of transparency in armaments.

4. The ad hoc committee did not attempt to elaborate precise and detailed technical definitions of what constitutes military holdings and procurement through national production respectively. However, to enable the elaboration of a global confidence-building measure, it is necessary to have at least a common understanding of the terms "military holdings" and "procurement through national production", as well as the term "armed forces", leading to definitions in broad outline.

5. On the basis of the available working papers and the discussion the ad hoc committee held on military holdings, military holdings comprise conventional armaments and equipment which are under the operational control of the armed forces within and beyond its land territory. This will include all conventional armaments and equipment: in active units, in depots, in storage, in prepositioned stocks, in non-activated units, undergoing repair or maintenance, undergoing modernization or upgrading. It will in principle exclude: equipment undergoing manufacture, testing or evaluation; equipment used for research and development purposes; equipment belonging to historical collections; and equipment awaiting export, decommissioned, or undergoing

destruction. Each United Nations member State is expected to report all conventional armaments and equipmnent which it considers to be of military significance.

6. On the basis of the available working papers and the discussions the ad hoc committee held on procurement through national production, procurement through national production means all conventional armaments and equipment which have been placed under the operational control of the armed forces. This includes production from commercial or government-owned sources, as well as national procurement from programmes in which United Nations member States are collaborative partners.

7. The ad hoc committee did not attempt yet to define the term "armed forces" or "military forces". In providing data on military holdings and procurement through national production, United Nations member States would be nevertheless invited, as a measure to enhance transparency, to indicate the type of forces to which these data apply.

8. A confidence-building measure on military holdings and procurement through national production, as described above, would be most effective if the data to be provided under such a measure would be reported to the United Nations register of conventional arms. Paragraph 8 of resolution 46/36L mentions inclusion of data on military holdings and procurement through national production as one of the possible modalities for early expansion of the scope of the register.

9. Accordingly, United Nations member States would be called upon to provide data on military holdings by 30 April of each calendar year reflecting the situation as of the preceding year. United Nations member States would also be requested to report by 30 April of each calendar year the procurement which took place within the preceding year.

10. United Nations member States would be called upon to provide data on military holdings and procurement through national production in the seven existing categories of the United Nations register of conventional arms. Those categories are battle tanks, amoured combat vehicles, large calibre artillery systems, combat aircraft, attack helicopters, warships, and missile and missile launchers. (For a definition of the categories, see the report of the 1992 panel of governmental experts, A/47/342 of 14 August 1992, para. 14.)

11. United Nations member States would provide the data on their military holdings and procurement through national production on an appropriate reporting form, either through expansion of the current matrix for data on arms transfers or on a separate reporting form.

12. Both for military holdings and procurement through national production, United Nations members States would provide data on the aggregated number of items in each of the seven categories of the register. United Nations member States also are invited to provide any additional information they wish in the remarks column in the respective reporting form.